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Mexico, he proved himself a worthy successor to Sessé, Mociño, Cervantes, Humboldt, Bonpland, La Lave, and Lexarza. Braving the hardships and exposures of travel in wild and unhealthy regions, undaunted by shipwreck, robbed and wounded by brigands, involved in the strife and wars of contending factions, he pursued for thirty years the work of collecting plants for the herbaria and gardens of Europe and America. Captivated by the novelties of a tropical flora, his earliest and latest field of research, and apparently his favorite one, was the southeasternmost part of Mexico, comprising the states of Tabasco and Chiapas. But from 1840 to 1855 he devoted himself to the interior and other states, crossing the Gran Cordillera three times from ocean to ocean, traversing the Gran Mesa, and ascending the volcanoes of Colima, Jorullo and Cempoaltepec. The number of plants that he has distributed to herbaria or introduced into cultivation must be immense. Their citations abound in the literature of tropical North American botany. M. DeCandolle refers to a series of *exsiccatae* in the possession of Cardinal Haynald, at Colocza, Hungary.

A list is given by Prof. Rovirosa of many notable new species, with which the name of Ghiesbrecht is connected; and to this list might well have been added the remarkable arboreal Scrophulariaceae, *Ghiesbrechtia grandiflora*, which served Dr. Gray as occasion to dedicate a new genus to its discoverer. This tree, known in herbaria only by the originals of description collected in Chiapas, has recently been met with by Baron von Türkheim at Santa Rosa, in the Verapaz highlands of Guatemala.

The memoir concludes with a pleasing account of its subject in his eightieth year at his home in San Christobal Las Casas, where he has resided since 1862: "Retired from the wandering life that he pursued for so many years of the middle part of this century, but still vigorous and active, he occupies himself chiefly with horticulture and with doing good to the most helpless class of the community, that he has adopted as his own. His medical services are ever at the call of those that suffer; his moderate means suffice, nevertheless, to bring bread to the door of many a needy one; all his actions reveal to those around him, that he, who has read the great book of Nature, has learned to know the duties that bind him to his fellow men. Proud, then, are the people of Chiapas to have him dwell in their capital, and to call him their countryman, as all of us should do who love the advance of science in Mexico."

The example of such a life is not without influence, and to it in some measure do we doubtless owe the botanical collections now being made by Prof. Rovirosa in these localities.—JOHN DONNELL SMITH.

Indian snuff.—In Lloyd's *Drugs and Medicines* of North America several species of *Anemone* are described and their properties discussed, but the species mentioned below are not included. It is to be greatly deplored that the welcome quarterly parts of that work are not now issued.

In the Northwest the Indians are familiar with valuable remedies for

many diseases. These remedies are all to be found in the varied flora of that great region. I have been shown recently specimens of "Indian snuff," much used by the Indians of the Rocky Mountain regions for nasal and related forms of catarrh. Two plants here go by the appellation of "Indian snuff." One is *Anemone cylindrica* and the other is *Anemone multifida*. The leaves of the plants are the part used. These are gathered before the seeds are quite ripe. They are dried and reduced to a fine powder. This powder is used just as the snuff of commerce. It produces quite a stinging sensation, makes the eyes water, and taken in sufficient quantity induces violent fits of sneezing. When these unpleasant effects have subsided, the throat and nostrils of affected persons become free and have a "comfortable feeling." The leaves are also broken small and smoked, as cubebs, and the smoke is expelled through the nostrils for the same purpose. The juice of fresh leaves is hot to the taste, and is sometimes rubbed into the nostrils instead of "snuffing."—F. W. ANDERSON, *Great Falls, Montana*.

EDITORIAL.

THE GAZETTE has again and again spoken of the importance of an investigator consulting the literature of the subject that he is at work upon. There is still such a crying need of this sort of application that at the risk of being tiresome we propose to speak of it again.

The establishment of the agricultural experiment stations has put upon many the necessity of performing some kind of experimental work who have either had little previous training in such work, or are mentally not adapted to it. Professor Sanborn says truly:¹ "I may say, speaking of the experiment stations, that many of us will always be more or less imitators. There are but very few original thinkers and workers. * * * The majority of men take some problem partly solved and work along that line. There are very few men in this country that lay out original lines, but these few have plenty of imitators." Now it behooves those who are following some line suggested by another's work, and especially those who are taking the partly solved problems and working at them, to know *accurately* what has been done before. For the failure to find this out two excuses are given; first, that the literature is not accessible; second, that the busy experimenter has not time. The first is somewhat of a justification; the second is utterly puerile. The difficulty caused by the inaccessibility of literature is to be overcome in two ways. In equipping the stations the library should be considered as indispensable as the laboratory. "Jahresberichts" and similar summaries *must be*

¹ At the second annual convention of Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations; Proceedings, p. 59.